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PROPOSED PROGRAMME

FOR THE CONSIDERATION OF THE OLD CATHOLICS
AND ALL CHRISTIAN COMMUNIONS.

BY L'ABBE MICHAUD.

ARTICLE I.—All old Catholics, of whatever nation they may belong, considering that Ultramontaniam is, both in principle and in action, the true corruption of real Catholicism, hereby declare that it must be repudiated to its very germ, and that all doctrinal decision and all disciplinary prescriptions declared and formulated by itself alone since the invention of the false decretals of Isidore, unto this day, are void of right and in fact.

ARTICLE II.—All Old Catholics will unite together in support of the religious principles of the old Catholic Church of the West, and receive in the sense and with all the liberty of the same principles, the seven general Councils acknowledged by herself and the Church of the East.

ARTICLE III.—As no particular Catholic Church can be established (or organized) except by a legitimate Episcopate, the association of old Catholics which may

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not find a legitimate and apostolic Episcopate in the West, will seek it in the Church of the East after having entered into communion with it.

ARTICLE IV.—All old Catholics shall form particular Churches according to their nationality, having the same common faith, and the same common sacraments with the ancient Catholic Church of the West or of the East, and retaining particular liturgy and discipline.

ARTICLE V.—This particular liturgy and discipline shall be, as much as possible, except the modifications rendered necessary by the change of social customs and conditions, the liturgy and discipline which were in force before the ninth century in particular Churches.

ARTICLE VI.—All particular Churches, whether in the West or in the East, thus professing the ancient Catholicism, under whatever denomination, shall assemble as soon as possible in an Ecumenical Council.

ARTICLE VII.—The Bishop of Rome shall be summoned before this Council to render an account of his conduct as patriarch of the West, and to be judged according to the canons of the Church, by all the chiefs of the united Church. Should he submit to that judgment he shall be confirmed by the Council in his office of first patriarch. Should he not submit, he shall be deposed, and his office cancelled, according to the canons of the Church. In that case the Council shall proceed to the election of a patriarch of the West.

ARTICLE VIII.—So soon as the Council shall have elected a Catholic patriarch of the West, all Churches professing the true Catholicism shall put themselves in communion with him, at the same time governing

themselves each by its national and legitimate Synod, and according to the canons of the general Councils.

ARTICLE IX.—While awaiting the establishment of a patriarch of the West, the Western Churches shall enter into direct correspondence with the patriarchs and synods of the Eastern Churches, without, however, losing their own respective autonomy.

ARTICLE X.—The Council shall make all reforms which it may think necessary whether for the progress of theological learning, or for ameliorating the condition of seminaries, or for the liturgy and worship, or for discipline of the clergy and laity, so as to promote as much as possible the unity of thought and of sentiment among all those who call themselves disciples of the same Christ and children of the same God.

ARTICLE XI.—In order to facilitate these reforms, and the preliminary labors which they require, there shall be instituted as soon as possible, in all the Catholic world, committees of action and committees of science.

ARTICLE XII.—The committees of action shall have for object the foundation and organization of parishes, the construction and maintenance of churches, the development of worship, preaching, the publication of works judged useful for the propagation of the true faith, works of charity, and the election and consecration of Bishops wherever they shall be necessary.

ARTICLE XIII.—The committees of science shall have for object to treat scientifically questions touching dogma, worship, morals, discipline, in such a manner as to draw clearly a line of demarcation between what is obligatory and what merely allowable, that is to say, on the one hand, all dogmas, rites and precepts, or pre-

scriptions, which have been believed, observed and practised by all the Church, and on the other hand, the opinions, and rites and prescriptions which have not been professed, or in use, except by a portion of the Church.

ARTICLE XIV.—Each nation shall have its particular scientific committee competent and chosen among all Christian communions.

Article XV.—These different special scientific committees shall be united to each other by a general committee composed of the most learned, themselves chosen by the particular committees in all Christian communions.

Article XVI.—Every Christian of whatever communion he may belong, shall have a right to forward to the particular committees his works and criticisms of which an account shall be given.

Article XVII.—The particular scientific committee shall transmit their works to the general committee, which, after all publications, all researches, and all discussions necessary, shall publish (*formulera*) its conclusions.

Article XVII.—The scientific conclusions of the general committee, once declared, shall be submitted to the Bishops and pastors of all the said communions united in a council truly Ecumenical. The Bishops and pastors of the same communions, thus united, shall judge in the interest of faith, of science, of peace and of unity, whether the symbol, the rite, and the rule proposed, shall be accepted and made obligatory for all, and thus sanction officially, by their authority episcopal and pastoral, the scientific conclusions of the general committee.

Article XIX.—Should the Bishops and pastors, in unison with the laity of their respective churches, officially approve this symbol, this ritual, and this code, this symbol, this ritual, and this code, shall constitute the common ground, dogmatical, liturgical and disciplinary, for all united Catholics.

Article XX.—Under that state of things the united Catholics shall consider as dogmatical and obligatory truth only that which has been believed as divine faith by the universal Church everywhere and always; as a rite divine and obligatory only that which has been observed as such by the universal Church everywhere and always; as a divine and obligatory precept only that which has been accepted as such by the universal Church everywhere and always. *Quod ubique, quod semper, quod ab omnibus creditum est.*

Article XXI.—In this case whoever shall adhere to these dogmas, these rites, and these common rules, shall be reputed true Catholic by all the united Catholics; and whoever shall reject them shall be considered and treated as no Catholic by all the united Catholics.

Article XXII.—But on the contrary, every doctrine which has not been held as divine faith by the universal Church everywhere and always, every rite which has not been observed by the universal Church everywhere and always, every precept which has not been accepted by the universal Church everywhere and always, shall be considered as allowable. Every united Catholic shall be at liberty to admit or reject them, partially or totally. Thus authority and liberty shall be reconciled.

Article XXIII.—In that case the different Christian communions shall be at liberty to express philosophically and scientifically the articles of the faith without being

ever able to impose them on any one under pain of anathema. They shall be at liberty to explain rites common to the whole Church by ceremonies which may appear to them most pious. They shall be at liberty to explain the disciplinary precepts common to the whole Church as it shall seem to them just and useful.

Article XXIV.—In that case those particular Catholic Churches, designated hereafter under the name of their respective nationality, that is to say:—the Catholic Church of England, the Catholic Church of France, the Catholic Church of Germany, the Catholic Church of Russia, the Catholic Church of Greece, the Catholic Church of Italy, the Catholic Church of Spain, &c., &c., shall be able to keep their own theology, their own particular rites, and their own special discipline, on condition that they shall not be thought obligatory for the whole Church; and to tolerate the theology, the ritual, and the discipline of each particular Catholic Church; and to remain faithful to the prescriptions of the XXI Article.

Such is the programme which we presume to offer to the Christian world for the peace of souls, for their practical union in Jesus Christ, and for the consolidation of the true Catholic Church.

This programme, however imperfect it may be in its details, appears to us in its main features necessary and practicable; *necessary*, because it is the only means to establish a common faith, and to establish a common faith is the only means to arrive at the desired religious unity; *practicable*, because once avoiding the region of speculation, and standing only on that of simple *historical facts*, the truly learned, the truly honest, and

the true apostles free from all party spirit, will easily understand each other.

I have translated the above from the French, and respectfully submit it to your consideration.

Would it not be well for our Provincial Synod to unite with the Old Catholics of Europe?

JOHN STANNAGE.

Kemptville Rectory, Ontario,)
Sept. 2nd, 1872.)

A. McPherson, Printer and Bookseller.









